

My office has prepared a very detailed question and answer section that I hope will answer any question you may have about applying for a service academy nomination through my office.

Should you have any questions not covered in this section, please don't hesitate to [contact](#) my office for further assistance.

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### Answers to Questions

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### Service Academies

#### **How can I find information on the various armed forces service academies?**

There are five armed forces service academies. Below I have listed each academy and their website for Internet access, as well as each academy's mailing address should you wish to contact them in writing:

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**How do I know if I'm eligible to apply to a service academy?**



<http://www.usma.edu>

Director of Admissions  
US Military Academy

Building 606  
West Point, NY 10996

(845) 938-4011



<http://www.usna.edu>

U.S. Naval Academy  
Attn: Candidate Guidance Office

117 Decatur Road  
Annapolis, MD 21402

(410) 293-4361



<http://www.usafa.af.mil>

HQ USAFA/RRS

Admissions Office  
2304 Cadet Drive, Ste 200

Colorado Springs , CO

80840

(800) 443-9266



<http://www.cga.edu>

Director of Admissions  
US Coast Guard Academy  
31 Mohegan Avenue  
New London, CT 06320

(800) 833-8724



<http://www.usmma.edu>

Admissions Office  
US Merchant Marine Academy

300 Steamboat Road  
Kings Point, NY 11024

(866) 546-4778 (Toll Free)

Applicants must be:

-

A citizen of the United States.

- At least 17 years old and must not have passed his/her 23rd birthday before July 1 of the year of admission to the selected service academy, with the exception of the Merchant Marine Academy which the applicant must be 17 years old, but not passed the age of 25.

- Unmarried, not pregnant, and have no legal obligation to support a child or dependent.

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### **What are the academy admission standards?**

You must meet certain requirements specified by public law in order to be considered for admission to a service academy. You will be evaluated by the service academy in three areas: academic performance, demonstrated leadership potential, and physical aptitude. You must also meet strict medical qualification requirements.

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### What are the academic requirements?

To qualify academically, you should have an above average high school or college academic record. A complete transcript of your academic achievement will be evaluated to determine your qualification. You should perform well on the standardized timed version of either the Assessment Program Test ( [ACT](#) ) or the College Board Admission Testing Program Scholastic Assessment Test ( [SAT](#) ).

These tests demonstrate an indication of your potential for academic success during your first year in college.

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### What are the scholastic testing requirements?

All service academies require candidates to schedule and take the **standardized timed version** of either the

American College Testing (

[ACT](#)

) Assessment Program exam or the College Board Admissions Testing Program Scholastic Assessment Test (

[SAT](#)

).

Academic evaluation is based on a strong performance on scholastic examination scores (ACT or SAT) and a candidate's school record – class rank and transcripts. Each academy sets its own test score requirements on the SAT and ACT exams.

Because the ACT and SAT tests are an important indicator of your academic ability, you should plan to take them early. Each of these tests has a slightly different emphasis. Although you are only required to take one of them, it is recommended that you should take both to reflect your true potential.

You may take these tests several times to try to improve your scores – your highest scores will be accepted.

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### **What are the medical and physical requirements?**

You must be in good physical and mental health and pass a Department of Defense qualifying medical examination.

Although medical evaluation standards differ among the various service academies, only one medical examination is needed to meet the application requirements of all service academies.

If you are a competitive candidate, you will receive instructions for taking the qualifying medical examination directly from the Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DODMERB).

You may be scheduled at an Army, Air Force, Naval or civilian facility near your home.

A Physical Aptitude Examination (PAE) – measuring an applicant's strength, endurance, agility, and coordination to determine each candidate's readiness to undertake the rigorous physical demands placed upon them at the academy – is required of all candidates. Each academy has its own qualifying standards.

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### **Are there any other qualifications necessary?**

Yes, aside from the academic, leadership, medical and physical requirements, you must also receive an official nomination from one of the nominating sources available. [Nominations](#) are covered in a later section of this Question and Answer Section.

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### **What courses should I take in high school to make myself competitive for admission?**

Each service academy provides information on what courses applicants should consider

taking in high school that would enhance their competitiveness for admission to their academy.

Generally, to prepare yourself for the academic curriculum at the service academies, you should complete four years of English with a strong emphasis on composition, grammar, literature and speech; four years of college preparatory mathematics, to include algebra, geometry, intermediate algebra, and trigonometry as a minimum; two years of foreign language; two years of a laboratory science, such as chemistry and physics; and one year of U.S. history, including courses in geography, government, and economics. If your school includes a course in precalculus and calculus in its curriculum and a basic computing course, these courses will be helpful.

Students should speak to their school counselors during their freshman and sophomore years to enroll in a college-prep curriculum. If you have a preference of a particular academy you would like to attend, it would be advisable to [contact the academy](#) to discuss your goals and high school preparation.

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### **What else should I do to prepare?**

A well-rounded high school background in academics, athletics, and extracurricular activities is a good way to prepare. Participation in student government, school athletics and clubs, community activities, work experiences, etc. provide leadership experiences that also reflect favorably in an academy's evaluation of a candidate's leadership potential as an officer.

It is also advisable for students to begin preparing early for the SAT and ACT tests. These test scores play a critical role in the selection process.

Historically, the higher the candidate's score on the ACT/SAT examinations, the more likely he/she is to be considered for an appointment.

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**If I apply for a nomination thru your office, do I also have to apply directly with the service academy?**

Yes. The nomination process is only half of the process. There are **two distinct processes**

—  
**One**  
is the nominating process through a [nominating authority](#), and the  
**second**  
is the application process through the [service academy](#) to determine whether an applicant meets the standards for admission established by the academy itself.

An applicant must accomplish both in order to gain admission to a service academy – a candidate cannot be offered admission without a nomination, and a nomination cannot be offered unless the individual is qualified by the service academy to be a candidate.

Applicants are required to [contact the academy](#) (or academies) of their choice and work within the academy's admissions system.

Each process – the nomination application process and service academy application process – has its own deadlines to be met. Each is a lengthy process so the earlier you start the application process, the sooner all related processes can begin.

The later you apply, the greater the chance that you will not complete all processes by their established deadlines.

It is recommended that applicants begin the process in the spring of their junior year in high school.

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### **Can I apply to more than one service academy?**

Yes, you should apply to every [service academy](#) of interest to you. Because each service academy has its own established standards of qualification and the vacancies are limited and keenly competitive, if you are not selected for one, you increase your chances of admission to one of the academies.

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### **What do I do to apply to a service academy?**

You must complete and submit a pre-candidate questionnaire to the service academy (or academies) of your interest. Each academy has their own established dates when applications will be accepted and deadlines when the application process must be completed.

Pre-candidate questionnaires can be obtained by writing to the service academy or filling out a pre-candidate postcard, which is available from my office. Pre-candidate questionnaires are also available on-line at each [service academy's web site](#) [se](#)

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### **What happens after I fill out the academy's Candidate Questionnaire?**

Upon receipt of a completed candidate questionnaire, the service academy admissions office will review the information submitted to determine whether the applicant is qualified to compete for admission. Applicants will be notified by the service academy of the results of this initial screening process.

Applicants who pass the initial screening will receive an application package from the service academy to complete for further consideration and evaluation.

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### Nominations

**Do all the service academies require a nomination in order to receive an appointment?**

No. The U.S. Coast Guard Academy is the **only** service academy that offers appointments on the basis of an annual nationwide competition rather than a nominee program.

Interested applicants should apply directly to the  
[Coast Guard Academy](#)

.

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### What are the authorized nominating sources?

Title 10, U.S. Code, establishes two nomination categories.

The first, usually referred to as “congressional nominations,” includes nominations made by Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate and the Vice President of the

United States:

**Nominations by Congressmen** can only be made for residents of the Congressional District a Congressman represents. In the U.S. House of Representatives, I represent residents of the Wisconsin 7th Congressional District.

In order to make an application through my office, you must be a resident of the [7th Congressional District](#)

of Wisconsin.

**Nominations by U.S. Senators** can only be made for residents of the state a Senator represents. In the U.S. Senate, Wisconsin is represented by Senators [Herb Kohl](#) and [Russ Feingold](#).

**Vice Presidential Nominations** can be made by the Vice President of the United States as the President of the U.S. Senate. Nominations are made from the nation at large.

he Vice President is authorized to nominate individuals to the U.S. Military, Naval, and Air Force Academies, but does not nominate to either the U.S. Coast Guard or U.S. Merchant Marine Academies.

Applicants must write to the [Vice President](#) for consideration:

Office of the Vice President

Attn: Military Academies

Eisenhower Executive Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20501

The second, referred to as “service-connected” or “military-affiliated” nominations, include the selections of the President and nominations of the appropriate service. Nominations for these authorities are only permitted to the 3 Department of Defense Academies (

[West Point](#)

,

[Navy](#)

, and the

[Air Force](#)

)

**Presidential Nominations** can be given to sons and daughters of career or retired military parents. Applications by eligible applicants are made directly to the academies. Appointments are competitive.

**Military-Affiliated** – Sons and daughters of Medal of Honor winners can be appointed to the academies. Applicants must only meet qualifications for admission. Qualified children of POWs and MIAs and of deceased or disabled veterans may complete for one of 65 appointments by applying directly to the academies.

**Nominations for Active Duty Enlisted Members** can be made by the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Honor military schools and ROTC units also have limited nominating authority.

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**Can I apply to more than one authorized nominating source?**

Yes, an applicant can apply to all nominating authorities for which they are eligible. Because nominations are limited and keenly competitive, I **encourage you to pursue every nominating authority available to you** to increase your chances of getting a nomination.

At minimum, most individuals are eligible to apply for a congressional nomination from their Congressman, two U.S. Senators, and the Vice President of the United States.

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**Is the nomination process the same for each authorized nominating source?**

No, each nominating authority will have their own application and selection procedure for nominations, including different dates as to when applications will be accepted and deadlines when application files must be completed.

It is advisable to carefully study and follow the instructions from each nominating authority you apply about their application requirements and nomination process so as to avoid any last minute misunderstandings or missed deadlines.

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### **How many vacancies are available per academy for nominations by a Member of Congress?**

For the [Air Force](#) , [Military \(West Point\)](#) , and [Naval](#) Academies, each Congressman and Senator is authorized to have a maximum of 5 cadets or midshipmen attending each of those academies at any one time.

When a cadet or midshipman either graduates from or leaves an academy, a vacancy is created that the Member of Congress may fill.

Each Member of Congress may nominate up to 10 candidates to be considered for each vacancy.

Generally, for Members of Congress, there will be only one vacancy per year for each academy.

Unlike the other academies, the [Merchant Marine Academy](#) uses state quotas rather than district quotas for congressional nominations.

Each state has an allotment proportionate to its representation in Congress.

All Wisconsin applicants compete for the state's allocated vacancies.

Several nominations will be submitted to the Merchant Marine Academy where academy officials will make the final selection on a competitive basis with the nominees of other Members of the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation.

Since no congressional nomination exists for the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, there are no vacancies available for a congressional nomination. Applicants interested in the [U.S. Coast Guard Academy](#) should contact the academy directly for consideration.

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### **Application File for a Nomination**

### Am I eligible to apply for a nomination through your office?

Since it is established by law that Members of the U.S. House of Representatives may nominate only those applicants who are residents in their congressional district, you **must be a legal resident of the [7th Congressional District of Wisconsin](#)** to be eligible to apply for a nomination through my office.

In addition, it is necessary for an applicant to meet the following **basic eligibility requirements** of the service academies:

- Applicant must be a citizen of the United States.
- Applicant must be at least 17 years old and must not have passed his/her 23rd birthday before July 1 of the year of admission to the selected service academy, with the exception of the Merchant Marine Academy which the applicant must be 17 years old, but not passed the age of 25.
- Applicant must be unmarried, not pregnant, and have no legal obligation to support a child or dependent.

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**My parents are residents of the 7th Congressional District, but my family is currently living elsewhere, am I still eligible to apply for a nomination through your office?**

Yes, so long as your parents' legal residence is in the 7th Congressional District of Wisconsin and you meet the basic academy eligibility requirements listed in the previous question.

Listed below are key questions that can determine residency for you and your parents:

*In which state do your parents pay state taxes?*

□□□ *In which state are your parents' cars registered?*

□□□ *Where are your parents registered to vote?*

The first two questions can establish that your parents are residents of Wisconsin. The last question can establish residency within the 7th Congressional District.

You cannot apply to more than one Congressman nor to Senators from different states – you must apply only to the Congressman and Senators from the district and state where your parents are a legal resident.

If you are applying from an address outside of the [7th Congressional District of Wisconsin](#), you will need to provide proof you meet the residency requirements.

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### When should I apply for a nomination?

Applications for nominations are accepted from **May 1 to November 15**. The initial application must be submitted to my [Wausau District Office](#) no later than November 15.

All other required materials, such as transcripts, test scores, and letters of reference, must be received by December 10.

Applicants must also contact the [service academy](#) (or academies) of interest to them to be evaluated as to whether they meet the admission standards of the academy to be considered a candidate.

This is a twofold process and each is a lengthy process with its own deadlines to be met. The earlier you start the application process, the sooner all related processes can begin.

The later you apply, the greater the chance that you will not complete all processes by their established deadlines.

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### **How can I obtain an application package?**

To obtain an application package, you can either [contact](#) my office to have an application package mailed to you, or you may print a [PDF version of the application package](#) from my website.

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## **What should I include in my application?**

The application package includes a checklist of material you will need to submit to complete your application file – an application form, a recent photograph, an official transcript of your high school records and class rank, test scores (ACT and/or SAT), Principal/Counselor Form, 2 letters of reference from non-relatives, and an essay on why you want to attend a service academy.

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## **How do I submit my test scores (ACT and/or SAT)?**

If you are taking the ACT, list code #7760 in the ACT registration folder.

If you are taking the SAT, you can arrange to have your score report sent to my office by listing code #0265 in the SAT registration form.

For [ACT](#) and [SAT](#) test dates, please check with your high school guidance counselor.

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**Should I wait till I have all the required material before submitting my application?**

No, you can submit material separately from the application form.

The deadline for the receipt of your **application form** by my [Wausau District Office](#) is **November 15**.

Application forms postmarked after that date will not be considered.

All **supporting paperwork** (i.e. references, ACT/SAT test scores, etc.) to complete your application file must be received by my [Wausau District Office](#) no later than **December 8**.

Applicants whose files are incomplete will not be considered candidates for a nomination and will not be scheduled for an interview.

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### Where do I mail my application?

All paperwork related to your application file should be mailed to my Wausau District office:

Congressman David Obey

Attn: Service Academy Program

401 5th Street, Suite 406A

Wausau, WI 54403

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### **What is the deadline to turn in my application?**

The application form itself must be received by my [Wausau District Office](#) by November 15.

All supporting paperwork to complete your application file must be received by my Wausau District Office no later than December 8.

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### **Nomination Selection Process**

#### **How are nominations selected through your office?**

To keep politics out of the nomination and to assure that nominations to the service academies are based on merit and every applicant for a nomination has a fair chance to compete for available openings, I utilize a Citizens Advisory Committee, made up of community representatives from the 7th Congressional District. They review candidate application files, interview the candidates, and recommend selections for nominations for the various service academies.

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**When are the interviews with the 7th District Citizens Advisory Committee scheduled?**

Interviews are usually scheduled for the second weekend in January. Qualified candidates will be notified of the time and place for their interview in December.

Only those applicants who have a completed application file, qualifying ACT or SAT test scores, and meet all requirements set forth by the service academies will be considered a candidate for nomination.

Applicants are responsible for the completion of their file, and applicants whose files are incomplete will not be considered a candidate for nomination and will not be scheduled for an interview. Application files are required to be completed by December 10.

[Selection Process Questions](#)

To view and print a PDF file, you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader software installed on your PC...

[Get it here, free!](#)

### **What should I do to prepare for my interview?**

A thorough knowledge of history and current events and an understanding of the Constitution and Bill of Rights is very important. The Advisory Committee will also take into account their evaluation of how well each candidate will be able to handle the special pressures of academy life.

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### **How many nominations do you make?**

For the [Air Force](#) , [Military \(West Point\)](#) , and [Naval](#) Academies, I make 10 nominations each year for every [vacancy](#) at each of those academies.

As stated in an answer to a previous question, unlike the other academies, the [Merchant Marine Academy](#) uses [state quotas](#) rather than district quotas for congressional nominations.

All Wisconsin applicants compete for the state's allocated vacancies.

Several nominations will be submitted to the Merchant Marine Academy where academy officials will make the final selection on a competitive basis with the nominees of other Members of the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation.

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**How and when will I know if I've been nominated?**

The nomination selections will be sent to the academies by the end of January, and candidates reviewed for a nomination will receive a letter from my office shortly thereafter notifying them of the results. If nominated, this notification will indicate the type of nomination (principle/alternate) and the service academy or academies.

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**What is the difference between a “Principal” and a numbered “Alternate” nomination?**

Principal and numbered Alternate nominations are used for nominations submitted to the [Air Force](#), [Military \(West Point\)](#), and [Naval](#) service academies.

The nomination process through my office is a competitive process, whereby 10 candidates are named to compete for a single vacancy.

Of the 10 candidates for a vacancy, a single candidate is designated as the “Principal nominee” and the other 9 are designated as numbered “Alternates.”

The service academy will evaluate the nominations and an appointment will be offered to the Principal nomination if he/she meets the academy's qualifying requirements. A Principal cannot be stepped over unless he/she is not qualified.

Only then can the selection process move on to the Number One Alternate.

This nomination cannot be stepped over unless he/she is ineligible, etc.

The selection process moves on numerically until a candidate is selected who is qualified.

Since the [Merchant Marine Academy](#) nominations compete in a state quota rather than a Member's vacancy slot, several unnumbered nominations will be submitted to the Merchant Marine Academy. The Merchant Marine Academy officials will make the final selection on a competitive basis with the nominees of other Members of the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation.

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**If I receive a Principal nomination to a service academy, does that mean I will be admitted to the academy?**

Not necessarily. A nomination does not guarantee an appointment to a service academy. Once the nomination selections have been submitted to each of the service academies, it is up to the individual academy to determine whether the nominee meets the qualifying requirements of the academy and whether a nominee will be offered an appointment.

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**If I receive an Alternate nomination to a service academy, is it possible for me to be admitted to a service academy?**

Yes, if you have an excellent academic and extra curricular activity record, you have a good chance of gaining admission with an alternate nomination.

First of all, the Principal nominee must be accepted. As explained previously, if the academy determines the Principal nominee does not meet the qualifying requirements of the academy, the selection process moves on numerically through the Alternates until a candidate is selected who is qualified by the academy's requirements.

In addition to those selected for an appointment to fill vacancies, it is possible that Alternate nominees I submit may be successful in gaining appointments under the qualified alternate or additional appointment categories. After every district's charged slots are filled, each academy will place the remaining Alternate nominees they receive in a qualified candidate pool. The academies will then look to those alternate nominees in the qualified pool to fill any remaining slots.

These appointments are charged against the service secretaries.

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## Service Academy Appointments

### **What is the difference between a nomination and an appointment?**

A nomination is required in order to receive an appointment, but does not guarantee an appointment to a service academy.

Appointments are invitations to attend the service academy, but cannot be made without a nomination.

Once a nomination is made, it is up to the service academy to determine whether the nominee meets the qualifying admission requirements of the academy and will be offered an appointment. All nominating sources officially notify the service academies of their nominees by the end of January.

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### **When will I find out if I am selected for admission to a service academy?**

Each service academy has its own timeline for decisions, but generally speaking, announcements are made starting in March.

After the service academy completes its evaluation process and make their appointment selections, my office will be notified by the academy as to which nominee will be offered an appointment. My office will notify the nominees selected for an appointment offer. It will then be up to the nominee to accept or decline the service academy appointment.

Once a nominee accepts an appointment, they must sign an agreement with the service academy, which outlines the service obligations which must be completed after graduation from the academy.

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